FELLOWSHIP IN PRAYER

Volume XIX, Number 6, December 1968

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Our purpose: To promote the practice of prayer among all religious faiths whose fundamental belief is in God, regardless of race, creed, or color, and whose tenets include the universal attributes of truth, honesty, justice and mercy, that thereby there may arise a closer relation to Almighty God and a deeper spirit of fellowship among mankind.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear Sir:

Responding to your desire for letters of complaint and disagreement, I find that your magazine preaches a religion that is too childish. Thus your poet, Viola Jacobson Berg, like the young Bonhoeffer and the somewhat older Newman, claims that of simple surrender.

But I am like the patriarch Jacob, I want to surrender at discretion, I ask God to enter with me into a covenant, a contract. Even if humanity is the body and God is the head, I maintain that, though the head is very important, the body is quite necessary.

Also, a slavish attitude toward God is too apt to be misconstrued by human religious authorities as a willingness to lick the dust from *their* feet (Biblical definition of simple surrender). I am willing to be their partner but not their slave....

— Kelly Janes
Monterey, Massachusetts

Dear Editor:

FELLOWSHIP IN PRAYER, issued in August, 1965, introduced the world to wonder-enlightening Life-thoughts of Harry Halsey Starrett. His contribution was titled: "My Ninetieth Birthday Salutation." In the Bible we read Elijah asked the widow woman to bake him a little cake. She told him she had only a handful of meal. Behold, Elijah assured her the meal would last countless days if she would share her little with him. "This handful wasted not," said the Lord speaking through Elijah.

Harry Halsey Starrett knowing as Elijah did of old, that *sharing* our mite with everyone coming to us, even as in a smile shared, we shall never waste Spirit. Miraculously just as the widow experienced, our smile increases, carrying sunshine to all who discover somebody cares in fervent desire of giving!

—Alice Richmond
Denver, Colorado

EDITORIAL

Happy birthday! On December 12, in case you have forgotten, Fellowship in Prayer celebrates its nineteenth birthday.

In the course of that many years, as in any lifetime, many events occur of many kinds with many feelings resulting from them.

In nineteen years, many dear friends have passed on. This will be the first December twelfth we can remember, for instance, when we will not be getting a long-distance phone-call from Harry Halsey Starrett, whose life and death we commemorated in the October issue.

Yet, at the same time, there are matters other than those which bring regret and nostalgia.

The fact that we are now entering upon our twentieth year is something really to rejoice about. It means not only the survival of the fellowship but—even more—the survival of our ideal and of our purpose.

Congratulations are in order, of course.... But it is the aim of the fellowship to start this anniversary year with ambitious plans. First: to double or triple or even quadruple the number of our subscribers. Second: to raise by additional means (since the price of one subscription does not pay the actual cost of the six issues it brings throughout the year) the income of the fellowship. These first two items are essential. And then, third, and essential also by the highest standards: the addition to the fellowship of more trustees (especially of more near enough to our New York offices to be able to contribute their counsel more frequently and exten-

sively), more advisors in every part of the country and world, more contributing editors, and, finally, more contributors.

With God's help, we on the staff will do our best by this aim. Will you? It is only what we, as a fellowship of many in many places, owe ourselves on our next birthday—our twentieth!

A CHRISTMAS PRAYER

I need no tree with shining ornaments
where green-robed hemlocks rise
from sapphire hills;
where lofty cedar, stilled with reverence
beneath low astral skies,
sweet incense spills.
I need no garish lights or tinseled stars.
Here, Rigel flashes glittering designs
on graceful spruce boughs!
snowy scimitars;
on white-niched oaks
and mitten-fingered pines.
As earth and heaven meet at mountain height
in quiet unity,
this is my prayer:
May we who know true peace this holy night,
give from our treasury
a brother's share.

—Margaret Casselman

BREAD OF THE ANGELS

Mark Halpern

The cup of life is often not a pleasant-tasting one to man. For it is ever brimming with the flow of difficult experiences encountered in this earthly school of stark realism. Sometimes, as man imbibes the contents of the cup of life, he finds the taste so bitter with the unbearable gall of the most painful suffering and poignant anguish that he turns away from it. Then it is he begins to look for a nepenthe, for a soothing anodyne, to give him surcease from his agonizing and distressing experiences.

But soon or late man learns that his immortal soul does not thirst after intoxicating distilled essence of the lotus of sweet forgetfulness. Not the cup that brings lulling oblivion of earth's problems and induces fantastic dreams of blissful illusion, does the soul of man desire. Instead, it hungers and thirsts after righteousness, to grow in divine mastery and perfection according to the pure and pristine pattern of the image of God within.

Indeed, what every man in his spiritual nature is truly seeking, what he is eternally thirsting after, is the celestial chalice of ecstacy! But none may sip of that nectar of life everlasting who has not first drained the cup of his life's trying experiences. And though the cup he must drink may be a bitter one, if he turns away from it, the celestial chalice of ecstacy is not yet for him.

A soft subdued light filled the spacious high-vaulted interior of God's house of prayer. The ancient walls reverberated with the mighty tones coming from the organ, swelling in thunderous grandeur and sweeping out through the entrance door which had been left open.

Outside upon the sidewalk a bareheaded unshaven young man who had been moving along in an aimless uncertain fashion, came to a sudden halt. He stood there listening to the sonorous organ tones floating out through the open door in a flood of inspiring majesty. His face was haggard and etched with lines of weariness and deep anguish. There was a peculiar unnatural brightness in his eyes—yet they seemed to be without life.

Something deep inside his befuddled mind caught and recognized the melody. It was Cesar Franck's *Panis Angelicus*. His elder brother had been wont to play it on the cello—before an unfortunate accident caused a spinal injury and paralyzed his body. The organ music continued to pour out of God's temple, seeming to come like the magnificent summons of a mighty angelic choir to the adoration of the Creator.

Slowly the young man climbed the wide stone stairs and passed through the open door, into the interior of the holy place. If there were others present beside the organist, he was not aware of it as he seated himself near the front. He seemed to be in a dream. In fact, for the last few days, life's realities had faded into a nebulous background. He could not face the thought of the unbearable burden and responsibilities his life had suddenly taken on for him after his brother was brought back from the hospital in an incurable helpless condition.

His brother had been helping him through medical school, and also supporting their widowed mother, who had been an invalid for years. With their funds exhausted by bills for medical and hospital services, they could no longer afford outside assistance for their invalid mother. And, with both the mother and her eldest son utterly helpless, the young medical student was trying

to keep from facing the fact that it was his duty to work for and serve them—and forget his lifelong dreams of becoming a surgeon. Drink and narcotics had given him only temporary surcease from his agonizing turmoil. He knew now, in the searing accusation of his conscience, that there was no escape from the stark realities that confronted him.

And so he sat there in the soft mystic light listening to the organ, and gazing up above the altar at a life-size likeness gleaming in the stained glass of Him who made the supreme sacrifice two thousand years ago on Calvary. As his soul kept drinking in the heavenly strains of *Panis Angelicus*, it appeared to him that those compassionate understanding eyes above the altar were seeing into his heart with infinite tenderness and laying it bare.

All at once he seemed to be no longer in the house of God. It seemed to him that he was in a garden and it was night. And kneeling in the garden was that wonderful compassionate One, His beautiful face drawn in agony. And the young man heard these words of prayer:

> "Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me; nevertheless not my will, but thine be done."

And no sooner was the last word uttered, than the young man found himself again in the holy temple; that gentle face of loving forbearance and perfect understanding, gazing down to him from above the altar in smiling ineffable tenderness. It seemed he heard that voice again, the same voice he heard in the garden:

> "Why turn thee from the cup of life that has been apportioned unto thee? In no other way than by draining that cup shall thy soul find the celestial chalice of ecstasy, which will dissolve thy sorrows and pains in the healing light of life everlasting. Then shalt thou know the Panis

Angelicus of thy immortal self, and thy soul's hunger for heavenly solace shall be satisfied by the bread of the angels."

That was all. The organ ceased playing and God's house was plunged into a profound silence.

But in the heart of the young medical student a great light of transcendant beauty and power blazed out. It flooded his entire being, illuminating and expanding his consciousness, till the veil that had been blinding his soul-vision was consumed into nothingness. The light flooded the sacred room with unearthly glory.

At last he arose, redeemed and regenerated with a newness of life in which all was well. Moving along the center aisle, he walked through the doorway and descended the stone stairs. He was going back home to take up his responsibilities. He would drain the cup that life had apportioned unto him.

And in meeting life's challenge to his soul, he was unconsciously taking his place in the ranks of the battle-scarred heroes of humanity's mighty legion of light. He had placed himself in the vanguard of that growing army of selfless servers who are leading mankind into a new day of harmonious goodwill and an era of universal brotherhood....

"I think God keeps the world moving in order to shake us out of our old set shapes and bring us back to more natural ways. That at least is what happens periodically in history.

"The present day is both good and very interesting."

The Abbe Henri DeTourville

IN THE BEGINNING

Bess Foster Smith

Christmas is a time when we like to think of the beginning of things. We think of the Christ Child, born in a manger, and the beginning of Christianity and of Western Civilization.

A Holy Monk of England named Venerable Bede, who lived in the seventh century, told of the legend of Caedmon, one of the first we know of, to write poetry in Angelo-Saxon (English).

Bede says the Muse came to him through direct revelation. Caedmon was only a poor, ignorant, bashful hostler, and when he met with the others in the evening to sing or to recite, he was so bashful that he ran and hid himself in the stable when it came his turn to recite.

Here, as he slept, an angel visited him and said, "Caedmon, sing me something—sing the beginning of all created things!" Thus Caedmon became a poet. He sang the story of Creation, of Genesis, Exodus, Daniel, Christ and Satan. His book of poems was handed down in various handwritings.

Benjamin Thorp has put some of these writings into present day English. They read like modern Haikus.

"Light was first
Through the Lord's word
Named Day—
Beautious, bright creation!"

It is interesting to remember, Bede says, in his Ecclesiastical History, that English poetry as well as Christianity had its beginning in a stable.

—From FAITH IS A STAR by Roland Gammon
(E. P. Dutton & Co., Inc.)

FINDING GOD'S GUIDANCE

Catherine Marshall

GOD CAN GUIDE US IN LIVING IN THREE WAYS: THROUGH THE BIBLE, through direct communication with Him, and through friends and circumstances. After two decades of exploration and experience of God's guidance, I am certain that He wills the abundant life for us when we seek Him in prayer, when we listen with open hearts and minds, when we determine to live lives of compassion and creative love for others. Doing our best to meet God's conditions inevitably gives us renewed faith in accepting His helpful guidance and in claiming the riches of grace. "Ye have not, because ye ask not," cried the Apostle James.

During my teen-age years in our Christian home in West Virginia, I dreamed of going to college. But this was Depression time and the Presbyterian church my father served as minister was suffering financially too. I was accepted at Agnes Scott College in Atlanta, had saved some money from debating prizes, and had promise of a work scholarship—yet we were still several hundred dollars short. When one evening Mother found me sobbing in my bedroom she sat down beside me and said, "I know it's right for you to go to college. Every problem has a solution. So you and I are going to pray about this, and ask God to tell us how to bring this dream to reality."

We knelt beside the old-fashioned, golden oak bed and prayed for God's guidance. Confidence and fresh determination flowed through me, as Mother's faith was contagious. The answer would come—how we did not know. Yet I went ahead and made preparations for Scott College. And soon after, Mother received an offer from the

Federal Writers' Project to write the history of the county. Her salary was more than enough for my college expenses. For us that was a first memorable experience in daring to trust God.

I well know how fantastic such guidance may seem to people who have never had any similar experience. Yet the combination of a personal surrender and outside intervention, the juxtaposition of need and supply, all make it difficult to tag such events "mere coincidence." For example, God used the guidance of circumstances in leading Peter Marshall, my first husband, from Scotland to the United States to enter the ministry. Peter wanted to go to China. That door was shut in his face. He then wanted to go into home mission work in Scotland. That door closed too. The way to the United States opened. This last proved to be God's green light. The reverse of this is that when we can get our own way only by riding roughshod over other people's lives and affairs, what we want is probably not right for us. Door-crashing and wire-pulling have little part in God's scheme of things.

Our generation is rediscovering the Bible, which is far out in front as the nation's best seller. Modern translations, making use of newly discovered older manuscripts, have made the Scriptures readable and understandable. There is a sense in which the Scriptures are the fascinating story of the directions God gave men and women; how guidance worked for them when they obeyed the instructions; what happened when they disobeyed. The New Testament contains surprisingly specific guidance for us. Its wisdom has the sure touch of ultimate truth. It is really a primer on the techniques of happy, workable relationships with other people. And that, after all, is the biggest single problem for any of us. We ignore these directions, therefore, to our own sorrow and loss.

Yet the Bible does not contain God's final revelation. God longs to pour wisdom directly into receptive minds capable of re-

ceiving it. This is the direct guidance of Mind to mind, of Spirit to spirit, through the medium of an authoritative inner awareness and conviction. For three centuries the Society of Friends has called it "the inner light." When we put our lives into God's hands and ask Him to direct us, amazing results follow.

God also speaks to us through other people. If you have never tried sitting down with one or two trusted friends, sharing your problems and pending decisions, together asking God for His signals, and then pooling your impressions and suggestions—you have missed a releasing and therapeutic experience. When we are not open to the perspective, advice, and common sense of trusted friends, we are probably not relaxed enough to get God's directions in any way. Several heads—provided they are carefully chosen—are always better than one. Moreover, creative ideas often come through in the presence of kindred minds which perhaps would not have come in solitude. The Quakers, long ago, discovered this fact too.

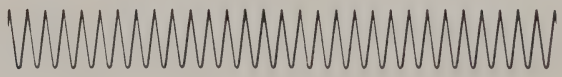
Before the summer of 1944 the possibility of asking a Living Lord a direct question and receiving a specific answer had never once occurred to me. But during that summer a crisis of illness emboldened me to take a leap of faith. I gave God a blank check with my life. Put most simply, this amounted to the willingness to take my marching orders from God for the rest of my life. From the moment of that decision God's guidance became a personal reality. Everyday life lost its boredom and feelings of futility and became a series of exciting adventures.

Actually, life is of one piece. This fact makes it almost impossible for God to direct a man's business life, for example, when the man still insists on running his social contacts or some other part of his life his own way. Many humans fail in early experiments with guidance because they fear the blank check. Deeply ingrained is the idea that God wants to take away our fun. It is at this point

that many people refuse to believe or trust the love of God for them. My own observation would prove that what God really wants for each of us is joy, health, productivity in our job, wonderful friends, and fulfilled, integrated personalities.

Abraham Lincoln once said, "I am satisfied that when the Almighty wants me to do, or not to do any particular thing, He finds a way of letting me know it." That's exactly the point. Having experimented with guidance for the last twenty years, I have found that when we really want God to direct our decisions, He will find a way to do so. Since my husband's death in 1949, a series of major decisions were inevitable for me. For many of these, I was poorly qualified, with little basic knowledge or know-how. In at least three instances, the wrong choice would have altered completely the channel and direction of my life. Yet with God's help, in each case I was prevented from making those wrong turnings.

But if we ever wonder whether we are subconsciously mistaking our will for God's will, we can easily test our decision against the other avenues of guidance: the Bible, direct communication through the inner Voice, our friends, or a combination of all of these. But in the end, with our cooperation, He *does* succeed in keeping us on the right path. The stuff of our everyday life lends itself beautifully to this kind of experimentation. A few personal experiences of finding God's wisdom, a wisdom easily recognized as beyond your own, a few proofs of His amazing personal solicitude, and your doubts, too, will melt away. Personally, I believe Jesus Christ meant exactly what he said, "I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly."



FROM THE HEAVENS ABOVE

Vicki Silvers

I heard a voice from the heavens above
A gentle understanding tone of love.
A mystery I cannot quite understand
As if I were in a wonderland.

It happened as I closed my eyes last night
I saw a star that sparkled bright.
I heard this power speak down to me
I know it was Him—It had to be.

Told me he watched me both day and night
That in my life I shall know great delight.
It is up to me to have it so
And in my hands which way I go.

As he continued on I could see a face
There was a glow of wisdom and of grace.
The voice that spoke to me last night
Came from the greatest height.

He said not to dwell in sorrow if things go wrong
There is a time to be brave and you must be strong
For not every day will your path be clear
There will be moments in life quite hard to bear.

See the beauty on this earth
Know the miracle of birth
Stretch your arms you have love to give
There is glory in each day you live.

Recapture the fragrance of a flower thinking of it
The scent of the rain before a storm has hit
Remember the snow you saw fall from the sky
And you have a richness that no money can buy

Each day you live grasp all you hold
You can give to yourself a pot of gold
Entirety is before your eyes
Never let it pass—be very wise.

I listened carefully to all He said
The other night as I lay in bed.
It wasn't a dream that He spoke to me
I know it was God—It had to be.

TRANQUILITY

Vicki Silvers

One dew kissed day on the countryside
Set away from city crowds
Where only the cool and calm abide
And the passing blue green clouds.

Where one may hear the sparkling streams
Feel his heart reborn
Know there is a time for dreams
Roses without the thorn.

The countryside as a chosen place
To rid lifes knots and twists
Where living is a contented pace
Where a heaven on earth exists.

CHANUKAH, THE FEAST OF LIGHTS

Edward E. Klein
Rabbi, Stephen Wise Free Synagogue, New York

Chanukah marks one of history's first great struggles for freedom. It was in the second century b.c.e. (before the Christian era) that the Syrian Greeks ruled Palestine. King Antiochus Epiphanes sought to impose Greek culture on the Jewish people. He ordered images to be set up in the local shrines in direct violation of the Jewish commandment against idolatry. Hellenistic culture was not unknown to the Jews. The three thousand Greek loanwords which appear in the Talmud attest to the influence of Hellenism on Judaism. The Septuagint translation of the Bible is an indication that Jewish culture and the best of Greek culture were not antithetical, even as the works of Philo Judaeus revealed the compatibility between Platonism and Judaism. It was not, however, Greek culture at its best that Antiochus sought to impose, not the the literature of Aeschylus and Sophocles, not the art of Parmenides, but, rather, Greek culture at its worst in an amalgam with the culture of the Orient. This was the cult of the body, the gymnasium, and physical pleasure. Matthew Arnold put it well when he described it as an over-emphasis on the "holiness of beauty" while the Jews emphasized the "beauty of holiness."

When in the little town of Modin, near Jerusalem, an ancient priest, Mattathias, saw a craven Jew bow down to a Greek idol,

he slew him, and, with his five brave sons, initiated a guerilla war against the Syrian-Greeks. The details are recounted in the Apocryphal books of I and II Maccabees. The Maccabean sons, under the leadership of Judas Maccabeus, were victorious, and cleansed the Temple on the 25th day of the Hebrew month of Kislev in the year 165 b.c.e. Legend has it that a cruse (or a jar) of oil they discovered was sufficient for one day, but by a miracle it lasted for eight days. So, for eight days Jews the world over celebrate Chanukah—literally, "re-dedication"—not in celebration of the military victory, but in celebration of freedom's triumph over the totalitarianism of the ancient world. What the Maccabees achieved was freedom of religion, freedom of a man's right to differ; and in their victory mankind since has found inspiration.

It is interesting to note that the Rabbis of the Talmud deemphasize the military aspects of the struggle and associate with Chanukah the great words of the Prophet Zechariah, "Not by might and not by power but by My spirit, sayeth the Lord of hosts." Were it not for this victory in ancient days, Judaism would have disappeared in the ancient world. There would have been no Christianity to rise like a living flame from Judaism; nor would there be an Islam, which also is a daughter of Judaism. Thus, a vast proportion of earth's people would have been deprived of Monotheism, the Scriptures, and the humanizing ethic of the Judeo-Christian tradition.

Unlike most other religions whose holidays celebrate events in the life of their founder, Judaism's festivals concentrate on historic events in the life of the people. The emphasis of Chanukah is not on Judas Maccabeus; it is on the cleansing of the Temple and the triumph of liberty. No one knows Judas' birthday, nor the date of his death, nor where he was buried. We do know, however, the date of the rededication of the Temple, and it is this we celebrate by lighting the eight-branched candelabra, one candle the first

night, two candles the second night, until, on the eighth night, all eight candles, together with the leader candle, are lit with rejoicing and the exchange of gifts.

Like Christmas, Chanukah derives in all probability from a much earlier celebration of the winter solstice, when man, in the time of longest night, sought to drive away the darkness by lighting fires. May the Chanukah lights and the illumined Christmas tree cast their combined rays to drive away the shadows of today's anxious world. "It is better to light a candle than to curse the darkness."

PARADISE FOUND

Catherine Cabeen Houck

Deep within a forest
at the end of a faintly marked
winding road
I found an indolent brook.
Wild iris grew along its banks,
five-fingered ferns dabbled their tips
in the cool, dark water,
rippling their own reflections.
Trilliums and bluebells bloomed in serenity,
an unsuspecting thrush
bathed in a pocketed pool.
I lingered in contentment,
here was the promise of Eden.

DIVINE GIFT

Zelma S. Dennis

How filled with radiance is the time of birth,
Like bursting stars within the heavenly dark.
The wonder of this life born here on earth
Designed in flesh the vision of God's spark.
The heart-filled hope this babe may one day bring
Alive to earth, the peace of Bethlehem's child.
The passing of the centuries still ring
With promise of goodwill that's undefiled.
To mold and guide this new-born destiny
With truth and wisdom from the Infinite mind,
A dream each mother prays will come to be
The way of brotherhood all men may find.
With each new life that looks to stars above
Comes blessing, and the gift of God's great love.

WHEN THE INNER SELF IS AWAKENED

Velta Myrle Allen

The Man of Galilee taught that morality consisted of duty to God, Father of the Universe, and Supreme Ruler of all that is, was, and is to be. . .which, if developed within the inner man, no other moral codes be necessary.

When the inner self is awakened it becomes Universal. . . perpetuates itself and is one with God. The greatest rule for human conduct is the simple one He gave the world: Love thy neighbor as thyself.

It does not involve racial prejudices nor creeds;

It is unaware of geographical location;

It is tolerant and understanding;

It is the basic ideal of Democracy as visioned by Phythagoras, Lincoln, and all the great minds of all times.

It is the desire of all people to live peacefully together as One World.

It is the one law that our Pilgrim Fathers brought with them when they landed on Plymouth Rock.

It is the cornerstone of the New World that will embrace all nations within its protective ideals.

It symbolizes the struggle from barbarism to intelligence and the Understanding of the Purpose of Life.

The longer we deny its efficacy, the longer we shall deny our God, even as Peter denied Him thrice!

Man knows where to find the Gates of Heaven, but will not enter in because he cannot see the other side! Therefore he constantly struggles with his own conscience in conflict. Skepticism bars him from his own happiness. He reads from the Great Thinkers of past centuries; he learns the civic codes of morality, and though he transgresses and pays the penalties, he also ignores the simple laws of Moses' Ten Commandments, and the Beatitudes, which embody all the rules for sane living upon earth.... for all people. The intricacies of a complex government alienate him from the Golden Rule, and even its simplicity confounds the wise!

Man with success has probed the secrets of the atom, and delved into the depths of science, but in his might, has he forgotten Power of the Universe rests with God?

Painfully, we unlearn the multifarious, and complex civil codes whereby man has tried for Universal cooperation and failed. There needs must be a reorganization of individual morality so that step by step and lesson by lesson we may assume international responsibility.

The immutable, eternal law of Principle has the same regard for all people and all places and remains forever the same. It is the clock of Universal chimes heard around the world, and never misses a stroke. Can we not set the alarm and awaken the inner self?

YOUR PERSONAL SECURITY

Part I

O. Aldrich Wakeford

You have great inner resources that have never been tapped. They are lying within, dormant but ready to be used whenever you call upon them. Call upon them boldly, confidently, and you will find that these inner forces will respond to aid you in whatever way you wish.

You should be bold and confident in evaluating your creative power, your power to be the kind of person you want to be, your power to accomplish that which you wish to achieve. With a lifted vision you will attempt more and accomplish more. Visioning in itself, however, is not enough. There is, of course, a certain amount of boldness and confidence in thinking big. If you don't think in big terms, if you don't envision the place you want to be, you can be sure you will never move forward from where you are now. The lifted vision is necessary, but boldness and confidence really come into use when you dare to take the first step—and then the second and the third and on—toward the goal that you pictured mentally.

Let the mighty forces of imagination and creativity, strength and energy, faith and persistence come to your aid. They are waiting to be released. They are ready for your call. They will make you a big person in mind, in heart, and in achievement. "Big," as it is used here, is not meant in the egotistical sense. Far from it. The truly big person is one whose mind and spirit are attuned with the Infinite. Through this attuning he is aware of his great capacity, but is humble in the knowing. His bigness does not lie in what he thinks of himself, but in the living, compassionate way he thinks of others. It does not lie in his small personal self, but in the God-

self that he expresses through worthwhile accomplishments and the faith that he brings to each day. He does not limit himself to the falseness of the egotistical person who tries to impress others with position and material possessions. The great intangibles of life, the values of which never change—those of love, loyalty, kindness and understanding—are his main stock for a magnanimous life.

The grocer has his shelves of items, his stock in trade. You, as an individual, have your stock in trade, also. The stock is intangible but nevertheless as real as the items on the grocer's shelves. You may never have considered your everyday life as being an adventure in buying, selling, and trading. But you are engaged in this venture, consciously or unconsciously. You "buy" each time you spend thought, time, or effort. If you are wise you will not spend this precious currency except for those things which you truly want in your life. A grocer would not think of paying first-rate prices for a basket of rotting apples. Not only would it be a waste of money in the first place, but if he added them to his bin of good apples they would also spoil. He just doesn't want them in his store, so he doesn't buy them.

In the same way you need to discriminate about what you let into your mental and spiritual storehouse. A grudge, for instance, is like the basket of rotting apples—its contamination reaches into the core of other thoughts and feelings and often causes hate and prejudice and sometimes actual illness.

You are letting yourself be overcharged when you waste priceless emotions on irritations and annoyances. You are paying diamond prices for paper-bag quality when you let worries creep into your days and nights and deprive you of your peace of mind and heart. With practice you can block these out as surely as the grocer can say, "No, thank you," to sellers of items he does not want. The next time you are confronted with a petty irritation or find yourself

beginning to worry, ask yourself this question, 'How much is this worth in my priceless emotions and time?" In the majority of cases the answer will be, "Nothing." If that is your answer, turn your thoughts to something else and forget the incident or subject.

In the everyday business of living you also "trade." You trade loyalty for friendship, love for love, a kind word for a smile, a thoughtful gesture for a bit of happiness, tolerance for tolerance. Sometimes the trading is on the negative plane: a harsh word for a harsh word, intolerance for intolerance, dislike for dislike, an unkind remark for a foe. When this happens you are the loser, regardless of who started such trading. If a neighbor makes an unkind remark about you, will it gain you anything to retaliate and say something as thoughtless about him? Doing so will only widen the stream of animosity. But you tip the scales in your favor when you refuse to let the unkind remark penetrate your inner consciousness. You tip the scales even more heavily in your favor when you trade something positive for something negative. Perhaps the most magnificient example of such an exchange—a positive for a negative—was after Jesus had been so ignobly treated and nailed to the cross, and He still could say of His brutal tormentors, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do." Throughout His years on earth He taught forgiveness, not just once but "seventy times seven," and kindness for unkindness. If He had not taught this and lived it, would we still be revering Him today? It is doubtful, because resentments and retaliations have no place in the magnanimous Spirit of God and we revere Jesus because of His oneness with God.

Look about you at your own acquaintances. Who gains your respect, admiration, and love—the one who is quick to retaliate with barbed remarks or unkind deeds or the one who is understanding and forgiving and compassionate? The person with the loving, generous spirit always gets the better "bargain" in life. He has

greater peace within himself, because he refuses to harbor resentments and grudges. His flow of creativity is more active, for it is not dammed up with pettiness. Also, he usually has more friends, for it is human nature to shy away from the backbiting, chip-on-shoulder type of individual and prefer the one with a generous spirit.

Don't sell yourself short. This is easily done if you have little or no faith in yourself. Or if you feel that your time and efforts are not worth much and therefore squander them carelessly and thoughtlessly. You are a person of great worth. Know this. Don't underestimate your value as a person or what you, as an individual, can do. Become aware of your inner power and put it to use. A British mountaineer once told his audience that climbers sometimes get into a spot where they cannot go down, only up. He said that he had deliberately put himself into such a spot occasionally. "When there's nowhere to go but up," he said, "You jolly well go up!"

If you are confident that your inner forces will come to your aid you will often aim higher and attempt more than you would otherwise. If you rely only on your human self, then you are limited in vision and scope, in energy and capacity. But by calling on those wonderful inner forces of yours you "unlimit" yourself. Your vision becomes stronger, your energy becomes greater, and your capabilities begin to unfold. You aim higher and live deeper. — *From MIRA*

We cannot believe in honor until we have achieved it. We had better keep ourselves bright and clean because we are the mirrors through which we must view the world.

— *George B. Shaw*

GOD'S SMILING CHILDREN

Alice Richmond

This year in old Denver town, lost children have appeared,
Wandering our long streets in parading closely bunched!
Under friendly sheltering trees, sprawling gay they lie
Or sit on sidewalk-curbs, togetherness lost—seeking
Companionship's warmth in leaning hard, quietly huddled....
High noon I strolled my street, upset; a small group smiled at me:
"Give me money?" soft, one called: "For food yes, give now please?"
Her eyes dewy, as hungry hand, young-pleading, curled open bare.

An old lady walked hurriedly eager on the other side
Crossing the street, generously offered their world
A religious book, she said, wherein they might read
Our Father in Heaven prayerful watched over them
His children lost: His love enfolding all in mercy glad.
"Do you believe in God?" she asked bending tender close;
Wistfully, they peered at her: smiling kind but silent....
Soon, politely their arms lifted upward gracious, loving
Permitted her to pass slowly through their crowd at peace.

Bright threaded warp of quick young smiling blessed, returned
My dream that night to pattern maternally sweet endeared:
Pictures of drifting wanderers in Denver town hope-searching;
Then snapped my heart awake within by swift compassion soaring.
Thus prayer glad-inspired, spirit rooted inward knew
How all good men together high heaven's truth can grow,
When those whom God his children calls, the universe around
In Christly love eternal share: Lord's treasured wisdom learn!

SIX WAYS TO PRAY

H. Richard Rasmusson

Prayer is usually thought of as speaking to God in terms of praise, petition, confession and surrender. When in the Lord's prayer we pray: "Hallowed be Thy name," this is prayer as praise and adoration. When we pray: "Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven," this is petition. When we pray: "Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors," this is confession in the mood of contrition and penitance. The mood and spirit of surrender find expression when we pray: "For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory, forever."

However, I want to talk about prayer in terms of techniques. Technique is defined by the dictionary as a method of rendering help in the performance of an art. A technician is one who is skilled in the execution of the art. What are the techniques, which if used rightly, will make us skilled in prayer, bringing our life closer to God, filling us with His Spirit, making for strength, energy and hope?

Let us think together about six ways to pray.

I

First, there is prayer as release. How many are our sins—irritations, resentments, jealousies, anger, pride? These and many other sins are in everyone of us. No one can live the abundant joyous life in Christ who keeps these sins in the heart. Nor can we by treating these demons of the Christian life as if they were minor mistakes, when they are an affront to God and His image in us. We

live in a fool's paradise to treat them as if they did not exist; or try and wall them off from the conscious self. This only drives them deeper into the unconscious where they fester and work other and deeper ills. "We cannot play tricks on life," someone has said, "and escape the consequences."

The great word of the Bible is: "If we confess our sins, he he is faithful and just, and will forgive our sins and cleanse us from unrighteousness." It also says: "If we say we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His word is not in us." To confess our sins honestly and realistically, and as honestly and realistically trust God He says we are forgiven and cleansed, is to know prayer as release.

"Tell Him about the heartache
And tell Him about the longings, too;
Tell Him the baffled purpose
When we scarce know what to do.

Then leaving all our weakness
With the One divinely strong,
Forget that we bore a burden
And carry away a song."

II

Second, there is prayer as reflective Christian thinking. Emerson once defined prayer as "seeing the facts of life from the highest point of view." For the Christian this means seeing all our life and our relations in it, from the point of view of the mind of Christ.

When Paul went into Arabia, he carried with him his past conditioning in Judaism. But his experience on the Damascus road had upset his religious philosophy and now his faith was a con-

fused jumble. So he went off into solitude to rethink and reevaluate his new experience. There he must have walked around and through his problem a hundred times. Here in Arabia was a man praying earnestly and in quiet desperation the prayer of reflective thinking—to understand the Highest.

Prayer is not the negation of thought. It is of the essence of it. It is making decisions and solving problems from the perspective of the abiding values of the Christian faith. "The scholar" said Emerson, "is man thinking." The Christian, I say, is man thinking from the Gospel standard and through reflective thought learning the will of God.

III

Third, there is the prayer of affirmation. Prayer as affirmation is affirming within ourselves some of the great, positive beliefs of His religion. We say within ourselves:

"The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures. He restoreth my soul."

"The eternal God is thy refuge and underneath are the everlasting arms."

"God is love."

"They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles, they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint."

"This pulls my life together."

" I find that I start the day on a stronger spring."

All the great prayers of the Bible are affirmations of faith. And because what we say and believe within ourselves has a close connection with what we become and do, we ought to take with constant seriousness the truth: "Out of the mind are the issues of life"; "As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he"; "According to your faith (expectation) so be it."

IV

Fourth, there is the prayer of dominant desire. Prayer, some people think, is not mentioned in the Beatitudes of Jesus. But it is. Not in so many words, but prayer as dominant desire is there. It was put by Jesus in these words: "Blessed are they who do hunger and thirst after righteousness," or "for goodness" as Moffatt puts it. It is prayer as dominant desire.

What do we hunger and thirst for? This is a serious question for each of us. There are people who pray conventional prayers, but the prayers are negated because all the time their desires are for something else. The terrible or hopeful thing about prayer as dominant desire is that such prayers tend to get answered. Here is why we must look well to our desires and the quality of them, for out of our desires are the issues of life.

V

Fifth, there is prayer as communion with beauty. "Beauty," as Hegel, the German philosopher, said, "is merely the Spiritual making itself known sensuously." All of us have experienced moral empowerment in the presence of beauty. It may have been a symphony by Beethoven; it may have been reading Keat's *Ode To A Nightingale;* it may have been watching the clouds or gazing at the stars; it may have been seeing a good deed done. A great teacher of ethics once wrote; "A power expulsive of evil resides in. . .

beauty, and sweeps us away from that preoccupation with self which is the root of vileness."

Keats, the master poet of pure beauty, wrote:

"A thing of beauty is a joy forever...."

To change the Scripture: "Worship the Lord in the holiness of beauty."

VI

Sixth, there is prayer as spiritual companionship. When all is said and done, what is Christianity except spiritual companionships? And primarily, it is companionship with Christ: "For we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image, from glory to glory." The Revised Standard Version reads "...are changed into his likeness from one degree of glory to another." We become like our spiritual companionships. We become like those we love and live with in the heart.

Our biological ancestors have been chosen for us; but not our spiritual ancestors. These we can choose. So Paul said: "For me to live is Christ." Jesus said: "I am not alone, because the Father is with me." An old German schoolmaster once carved over his door: "Dante, Moliere and Goethe live here." Great companionships, all of these. And such inward fellowships, with great and good men and women, with the Christ of God, is the essence of prayer.

These thoughts about prayer will have been set down in vain unless they inspire you to pray: to begin the practice of prayer, if you do not pray; to pray more constantly, if you have prayed irregularly. "Teach us to pray."

THE WONDROUS POWER OF WORDS

Clara Ullrich Samuels

Oh Words — primarily controlled by the mind,
Backed by the desires of the heart—
You have the drawing power needed
To unite the minds and hearts of mankind.
Your silences, however, tragically create an apathy
For blankness fosters a deadly vacuum.

Oh Words, you can constructively prepare a child
For life, or mark him with an ageless distress;
You can turn a house into a home
Or make it a veritable "Hell on Earth."
Your power can condemn a hapless human
Or spark a soul's joyful survival.

Oh Words, if misused, you can engender intense hatred
Which may start the prophesied Battle of Armageddon
That would wipe all life out of being forever;
Or, you may earn the approval of the entire world
Thus uniting our divided universe with love
And bringing about the ultimate peace we pray for.

The Words of the Bible clearly demand
That we honor our Almighty God
And love our neighbor as ourselves.

TO COME

Emily Sargent Councilman

When snowbirds silhouette
on crystal white,
I'll recall this autumn's final fling—
my maple-flaming mountain
golden-bright
against storm-charcoal gray....
but promising.

HAND IN HAND

Take my groping hand, O mighty One,
And turn your light upon my darkened face,
Teach me Lord, unselfish ways of love—
Draw close, impart your glow on the living whole.

Take my groping hand, O blessed One,
And guide my truant soul which roams alone
Separated from your kingdom. Sustain
Me in my growing faith and larger hope.

Take my groping hand, O lofty One,
And like the time of parting waters, lead
Me from this ship-wrecked shore, that I may know
That night is not forever beyond the grave.

— *Jaye Giammarino*

UNLIKE THE ANCIENT SHEPHERDS

The years, unlike the ancient shepherds,
still
Stand guard in God's hill country of
good will.
They watch by night beside the flocks of
peace
As envious shadows on their folds
increase.
And once again Christ is proclaimed a King
And all the angels in their places sing.

— *William Walter DeBolt*

SQUIRREL CHRISTMAS

It crossed the lawn
flanked by a tail, a question mark,
picked up a nut
and buried it in the grass
with paws expert as pleasant thoughts
before ascending a tree in triumph.

We found no sign of disturbance.
We discovered no hidden morsel.
We nodded our heads and knew
there would be a squirrel Christmas.

— *William Walter DeBolt*

NOTICES and COMMENTS

GREETINGS AND THANKS. The staff of Fellowship in Prayer extends to all members, friends, and contributors the very best wishes for this season of the year. We also say, "Thank you," for it is all of you who make the Fellowship what is.

NEW ADVISOR. Katharine Aurandt, of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, has kindly accepted our invitation to be a new advisor in our Eastern Zone. After years as private secretary to an eminent physician, she has now turned her energies and wonderful exuberance to the offering of less specialized but no less persistent help to others. Already she has shown considerable interest in FIP.

ARE YOU MOVING? If so, please let us know well in advance what your new address is going to be. If you will notify us in advance, we will be able to see to it that your copy of FIP reaches you without interruption—or the extra postage that is necessary for forwarding copies to subscribers.

EXPIRATIONS. We hope, of course, that you will want to renew your subscription when it expires. Since the postage rate has gone up, and since we continue to be a nonprofit organization, we cannot afford to go on sending copies to those who do not for whatever reason want them. So, please, if you do not want to receive the bimonthly, do let us know.

GIFT SUBSCRIPTIONS. Enclosed in this issue is a blank for you to fill out in order to send FIP to your friends and other dear ones for the holiday season. We are counting on your doing this—not only because of the holiday but as your contribution toward the accomplishment of our aims for our twentieth anniversary next December.

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AND STILL THE STAR

The Magi saw with many thrills
Christ's star exploring all the sky,
And watched until upon the hills
It shone, a questioning angel's eye,
And stood in splendor strange and new
Above the wide and sorrowing deep
Casting its glory down to hue
Earth with its hordes stretched out in sleep—
Stretched out in panoplies of sleep.

And still the star, life's debts to pay,
Comes out above a heavy night
And, borrowing from the purse of day,
Covers the world with coins of light,
And sends its beauty everywhere
On land and over all the deep
To seal tired eyes and scatter care
Wherever man has lain to sleep—
Has lain to dream and wake from sleep.

— *William Walter DeBolt*

"For a world united in prayer"

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